

# World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

## Nebraska Toolkit



See more at: <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/WEAAD>

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) encourages your organization to hold activities June 15th that spotlight the mistreatment of older adults, and to communicate how individuals, organizations and communities can take action **NOW**. The need is obvious:

- **One in 10 Americans is a victim** of elder abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- As few as **1 in 14 cases of elder abuse come to the attention of authorities** making elder abuse significantly under-identified and under-reported.
- Our older population continues to grow. **By 2030, almost 20 percent of our population** will be 65 or older – nearly twice as many as in 2007.
- From 2010, our **85-plus population will increase 15 percent** to 6.6 million in 2020.
- **Elders will lose a minimum of \$2.9 billion annually** due to financial abuse and exploitation.
- Seniors are living longer, but not necessarily better. **Declines in cognitive and physical functions make them more vulnerable to victimization.**

For these reasons, your organization must become involved in this statewide effort. Included in this Toolkit are ideas to assist you in planning effective activities to catch the attention of residents in your community, build a greater awareness of elder abuse and inform them what they can do.

Once a year, we place a bright spotlight on elder abuse during World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). This toolkit provides ideas and tools to help you plan and implement an effective awareness event in your area. Included here are materials, resources, a news release, proclamation and messages, as well as information on other sources of support. Copies of materials can be found at:

<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/WEAAD>.

We invite you to use the toolkit as a stepping stone to achieve year-round awareness of elder abuse and what the public in your area can do about it. No effort is too small to be counted in an awareness campaign, and the more often we put this critical message in front of the public, the greater the impact. For more ideas, go to: <http://www.acl.gov/newsroom/observances/WEAAD/index.aspx>. Click on “Tools & Tips.”

## Activity Ideas

### (Reach Out to a New Audience)

During the week of WEAAD, or even including the week before if you operate in a large area, hold an event in key communities each day for greater, widespread awareness and impact.

### Presentations or Discussions about Elder Abuse

Host a presentation on ways to prevent elder abuse and neglect and how to recognize and report elder abuse.

- **Contact local civic organizations** ASAP (Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists, Lions, Sertoma, etc.) and ask to make a presentation to them as they usually schedule programs several weeks in advance. Consider using the PowerPoint and the talking points on page 9.
- Outreach can be made to other targeted groups using the following resources:
  - **Women:** Churches, beauty salons, widowed persons' services, Every Woman Matters Program (1-800-532-2227, or [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/womenshealth\\_ewm.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/womenshealth_ewm.aspx)).
  - **Residents in long-term care facilities:** Nebraska Health Care Association ([www.nehca.org](http://www.nehca.org)), Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office.
  - **Caregivers:** Caregivers Support Groups, local grandparent resource centers, caregiver fairs and retreats, Partnerships in Aging ([www.piaging.com](http://www.piaging.com)).
  - **Low-Income Individuals:** Social Security offices, rural and urban health clinics, Weatherization Program (<http://www.neo.ne.gov/wx/wxindex.htm>), Senior Transportation Program (<http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/>), Nebraska Telephone Assistance Program for low income (<https://ntap.gisworkshop.com/>), Seniors in Congregate Meal Sites, Community Action Programs ([http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/chs\\_csbgs\\_csbgagencies.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/chs_csbgs_csbgagencies.aspx)), and Rural Housing Program ([www.ruraldev.usda.gov/ne](http://www.ruraldev.usda.gov/ne)).
  - **Homebound Persons:** Meals on Wheels programs through AAAs, visiting nurses, mail carriers, home companions (Senior Companion Programs through AAAs).
  - **Limited English Proficiency Persons:** Community centers (Asian, Hispanic, intercultural senior center), Hispanic and Vietnamese Radio and Television programs, Nebraska Appleseed ([www.neappleseed.com](http://www.neappleseed.com)).
  - **Individuals with physical and mental disabilities:** ARC ([www.arc-nebraska.org](http://www.arc-nebraska.org)), League of Human Dignity ([www.leagueofhumandignity.com](http://www.leagueofhumandignity.com)), Easter Seals, Behavioral Health Regions, Vocational Rehabilitation Offices.

- **Native Americans:** Native Americans Senior Centers, Native American Tribes, Health Coalition Elder Program “Tired Moccasins,” Urban Indian Centers.
- **Veterans:** Veterans Homes (Bellevue, Grand Island, Norfolk, Scottsbluff), Veterans Service Centers, American Legion.
- **Victims of Domestic Violence:** Domestic Violence Program, APS Service Offices.
- **Visually Impaired Individuals:** Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Library Commission Talking Books and Braille Services.
- **Hearing Impaired:** Commission for the Hearing Impaired [www.ncdhh@nebraska.gov](mailto:www.ncdhh@nebraska.gov).
- **General Population:** Banks, doctors’ offices, medical societies, ministries.
- In this toolkit on page 9 are **Talking points** for a presentation. You may use all the information or segments of it, depending on the length of your presentation. It provides background information on elder abuse; screening, response and safety planning; services and community partners; and federal legislation and programs.
- Possible sources for speakers include:
  - Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance (Investment and Securities Fraud)
    - Cathy Jones, Security Analyst - 402-471-2914
  - Adult Protective Service Specialist (mandatory reporting and red flags for abuse, neglect or exploitation)
    - Local APS
    - Julie Hippen, DHHS APS – 402-471-1731
  - Legal Aid of Nebraska
    - Go to <http://legalaidofnebraska.com> for the office in your area.
  - Long-Term Care Ombudsman (residents’ rights)
    - Tami Barrett, Elder Rights Coordinator – 402-471-6834
    - Area Agencies on Aging
  - AARP
    - Mark Intermill – 402-323-5424
  - Local Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Service providers (abuse in later life, resources for victims)
    - Go to [www.ndvsac.org](http://www.ndvsac.org) to locate your local Domestic Violence Sexual Assault provider.
  - WEAAD partners to help you reach out to target groups and minorities:
    - Office of Health Disparities and Health Equity  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Phone: 402-471-0152  
Email: [www.dhhs.minorityhealth@nebraska.gov](mailto:www.dhhs.minorityhealth@nebraska.gov)
    - Elder Abuse Prevention Program  
Winnebago Tribe  
P.O. Box C  
Winnebago, NE 68071  
Phone: 402-878-2231, Ext. 1315

## Host an Open House

Host an open house at your facility and/or the local senior center(s).

- Provide information about elder abuse and neglect, such as the information in this Toolkit.
- Make a presentation during the open house about elder abuse and neglect.
- Invite the public to the local senior center for an hour-long **lunch and presentation or discussion**.

## Letter to the Editor or Opinion Editorial

Newspapers accept feedback from the community on topics of concern to their readers. Following are two approaches:

- Newspaper policies regarding letters to the editor may vary, but providing a well-written, succinct letter that contains useful information could be accepted for printing.
- Newspapers also consider opinion editorials from the community, which are longer and usually placed in a position of greater prominence on the editorial page. You may need to contact local editors for their agreement to run your opinion editorial.
- Describe the importance of respect, dignity and caring throughout people's lives, or illustrate an incident where the rights of older adults were not protected and their needs were not being met.

## Public Service Announcements

DHHS will make available to radio stations in your area a public service announcement, or PSA. Radio stations run PSAs as a public service and at no cost. We would appreciate it if you would call your area radio stations and ask them to consider running the PSA. In addition, you may request a 30-second PSA about WEAAD with a mention of your agency to non-profit organizations. The following first bullet point is the copy is for the DHHS PSA, and the second bullet point is longer and adapted from the WEAAD organization:

- Did you know there's a silent crisis in every zip code in Nebraska? Elder abuse, neglect and financial exploitation cause thousands to live in silent fear. If you think a vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected or financially exploited, call 1-800-652-1999. Brought to you by your Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.
- Every day seniors are victims of financial exploitation, neglect and physical or emotional abuse. Your elderly neighbors could be suffering out of fear of retribution, because of a lack of care, from embarrassment, or concern about institutionalization. They may be afraid to speak out because the abuser is a member of their own family, a caregiver on whom they depend, or someone they know. If you suspect someone is a victim of elder abuse, call 1-800-652-1999. It can be done anonymously. On behalf of (*your agency*) thank you for caring. Again, call 1-800-652-1999.

## Dedication or Announcement

If you have moved into a new building, added to your building, launched a new program or have other note-worthy changes, consider holding a dedication or announcement to celebrate. This would provide the opportunity to bring attention to all your activities as well as to feature elder abuse and neglect.

## Internet

- Post information on the front page of your website leading up to and following WEAAD with a link to further information, such as DHHS' Adult Protective Services site:  
[http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Pages/nea\\_aps\\_apsindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Pages/nea_aps_apsindex.aspx).
- Also post information on your social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. Social networking is an excellent way to engage your community around this important and timely subject. Following are guidelines for social media postings.
  - Keep this year's theme in mind:

**One person. One action. One nation. United against elder abuse.**

- Below are some sample posts that you can customize and use. Use the 2014 WEAAD theme and hashtag when posting.
  - **Here are some tips for composing effective Facebook and Twitter posts.**
    - Have a clear and concise message.
    - The best posts are a call to action. Turn your followers into effective advocates by giving them a clear action to take.
    - On Twitter, Spell out the word 'retweet' if you want others to share your post. This practice has been found to be more effective than typing 'RT'.
    - When retweeting or reposting, add value to the post by adding your own commentary, or add a link to additional media on the subject.
    - Use popular hashtags, but use them in moderation. Using more than two hashtags can muddle your message and is not recommended.
    - Add something visual to your post to increase interest. A photo, link with a thumbnail, or video can generate significantly more attention. Check out the logos from our tool kit.
    - If you are planning a WEAAD event, post about it!
- **Twitter** – Twitter is a fast paced social network where users share brief posts that usually accompany photos, links, and/or hashtags. What are hashtags? Using the # symbol, or hashtag, makes the word or phrase that comes afterward searchable. It is a great way to enter or create a larger conversation. Remember that Twitter posts may contain a maximum of 140 characters.
- **Hashtag ideas**
  - #1U1Act1Nation
  - #WEAAD2014
- **Twitter Post ideas**
  - Be a part of a nation united to stop elder abuse! [Learn more](#) and retweet to raise awareness #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation
  - What can one person do? One person can change the world. #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
  - Share a picture of an older adult whom you admire. What do you respect about them? Abuse cannot thrive where respect resides! #WEAAD2014 [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
  - Put faith into action. Respect our elders. 1 person. 1 action. 1 Nation. United against elder abuse. #1U1Act1Nation [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
  - Protecting our elders begins at home. Check on the older adults in your life today! #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
  - I'm rocking my purple ribbon! #1U1Act1Nation what are you doing to raise awareness about elder abuse today? [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
  - Abuse cannot survive where respect resides! Act to protect elders! #1U1Act1Nation #WEAAD2014 [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
- **Facebook Posts** – Facebook has expanded its features over the years to include the ability to follow organizations, and public figures, but it still maintains a more personal, somewhat slower-paced user environment. Posts can be a little longer, and have more conversation and

engagement associated with them. Facebook now uses hashtags too, but when you search hashtags you are limited to seeing only results from within your own network.

- Host a Facebook challenge inviting people to share pictures of older adults whom they admire and say what they respect about them. We believe that abuse cannot survive where respect resides. We invite you to share our challenge post that is listed below along with our other sample posts.

- **Facebook Campaign – Sample post**

- June 15<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Join our challenge! Share a picture of your parents, grandparents, or an older adult in your life and tell us something that you respect about them. Because abuse cannot survive where respect resides! Add our hashtag #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation. Share to your own Facebook page, or the [National Center on Elder Abuse](#) page and stand united against elder abuse.

- **Other Sample Posts**

- Did you know that 1 in 10 American elders are being abused, neglected, or exploited every year? It is a secret national shame. Want to be part of the solution? June 15<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. For one day, take one action to raise awareness. Invite a friend to like the national WEAAD Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/NationalCenteronElderAbuse](http://www.facebook.com/NationalCenteronElderAbuse) and follow this link [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad) to learn other easy steps that you can take. One person. Once action. One Nation. #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation
- Today I am wearing a purple ribbon to honor survivors of elder abuse and taking to Facebook to raise awareness. Won't you join me? What are you doing to commemorate WEAAD? One person. One Action. One Nation. United against elder abuse. #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation
- Curious to know what people are doing to commemorate World Elder Abuse Awareness Day? Visit <http://www.acl.gov/weaad> to search for events all over the US, add your own event or activity, and sign up to be a WEAAD collaborator. #WEAAD2014
- Every year 5 million elders are abused in the US alone. It doesn't have to be this way. There are many ways to make a difference. Check on the older adults in your family or community. Call your county Adult Protective Services if you suspect abuse, or neglect. Give a caregiver a couple of hours off. Talk to your friends about elder abuse. One person can make a difference. One person can save a life. Learn more: [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
- Did you know that neglect is the most common form of elder abuse? Be an advocate for one day and help protect vulnerable adults. #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation Learn more: [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)
- Have you known anyone who has been the victim of elder abuse? I have. It happens more often than you would like to think. In fact, 1 in 10 elders are abused in the US every year. Do you have a story? Share it to help raise awareness about abuse and to help prevent abuse from happening to others. . #WEAAD2014 #1U1Act1Nation Learn more: [www.acl.gov/weaad](http://www.acl.gov/weaad)

## Awards

- Organize an awards ceremony or awards dinner for June 15. Seek out individuals or groups of people who have worked to raise awareness of abuse issues in later life. These should be people



who have worked to ensure fair treatment of older people in your community or at your workplace. Examples include:

- People who have worked to help communities build bridges between individuals and organizations so they have a better understanding of abuse and neglect in later life.
- People who have worked with a particular ethnic community on abuse issues affecting older adults.
- People who have worked with administration to meet the cultural foods needs of ethnic seniors in a congregate setting.
- People who have worked to reduce the use of physical or chemical restraints in nursing homes.
- People who work to bridge the generation gap between older adults and children.
  
- People who conduct trainings to educate their communities about elder abuse.
  - Make your award a tradition every June 15th. These individuals who receive this award should be given a certificate acknowledging their participation and contribution.
- An award could be presented at a special meal that the community is invited to attend or at a special ceremony that will afford the presenter an opportunity to elaborate on preventing abuse and neglect in later life, and how to recognize and report elder abuse. The presentation also could be part of another activity.

## Proclamation

- Request that the mayors and/or county commissioners in your area sign a proclamation declaring June 15<sup>th</sup> Elder Abuse Awareness Day and urge citizens to participate in your event.
- Take your agency's officials with you when the proclamation is signed and invite the news media to cover it. Be prepared to speak to the abuse of vulnerable adults and the hotline phone number.
- Following is a sample proclamation:
  - WHEREAS: *(Community)*'s seniors are valued members of society and it is our collective responsibility to ensure they live safely and with dignity.
  - WHEREAS: Abuse of older people is a tragedy inflicted on vulnerable seniors and an ever-increasing problem in today's society that crosses all socio-economic boundaries.
  - WHEREAS: Combating abuse of older people will help improve the quality of life for all seniors across this state and country, and will allow seniors to continue to live as independently as possible and contribute to the life and vibrancy of *(Community)*.
  - WHEREAS: *(Community)*'s seniors are guaranteed they will be treated with respect and dignity to enable them to continue to serve as leaders, mentors, volunteers and important and active members of this community.
  - WHEREAS: We are all responsible for building safer communities for *(Community)*'s seniors.
  - WHEREAS: The well-being of *(Community)*'s seniors is in the interest of all and further adds to the well-being of Nebraska communities.
  - WHEREAS: *(Agency name)* will hold *(event)* on *(date, time & location)* in observance of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and the citizens of *(Community)* are invited to attend.
  - I, Mayor of *(Community)*, do hereby proclaim June 15<sup>th</sup>, *(year)*, as Elder Abuse Awareness Day and encourage all *(Community)* residents to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of *(Community)*'s seniors.
  - Dated on this *(date)* day of *(month)*, *(year)*.
  - Signed: *(Space to sign)*, Mayor

## Other Promotional Efforts

- DHHS Central Office will distribute the following to APS, AAA, LTC Ombudsman, and Domestic Violence Program staff.
  - Fact Sheet
  - SPEAK UP Wallet Cards
  - Posters
  - Bookmarks
  - APS Brochure
  - Financial exploitation placemats
  - Tips card on telemarketing scams
  - Clinician's guide on elder investment fraud and financial exploitation
- Prepare your own materials.
  - Provide a list of local resources for information about elder abuse and neglect.
  - Develop your own brochure about available services for abuse and neglect situations.
  - Ask a group make purple ribbons to distribute to people to wear on June 15<sup>th</sup>, and encourage others to wear purple in recognition of WEAAD.
- Post information about your event on community bulletin boards and kiosks, in stores, on your local cable TV community channel, local commercial TV station, time and temperature signs, community websites, etc.
- Send invitations to your event via email and social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.
- Contact local law enforcement to distribute information during Neighborhood Watch meetings.
- Request other organizations, especially those that serve seniors, distribute information about your event, or even information about preventing abuse and neglect in later life, and how to recognize and report elder abuse. Plan to submit information so it can be used for the June edition of their newsletter or other communications. (Groups to contact could include: Domestic Violence, Health Care and Assisted Living Associations, AARP, etc.)
- Distribute materials to places where seniors gather (such as, Meals on Wheels, doctor's offices, banks, beauty salons, rural health centers, housing authorities, etc.).
- Enclosed is a mailing list of all the news media in your area that should be informed about your event and activities.
- Central Office will distribute nomination forms for the Elder Abuse Prevention Advocate of the Year. Nomination forms will be submitted to Central Office and the committee will select an Advocate of the Year from five areas across the state, and one Advocate of the Year to someone who has made a statewide impact. Nomination forms will be due May 31, 2014. Once the Elder Abuse Prevention Advocate for each area is selected, Central Office will advise the AAA and/or the APS office who will be asked to organize an event to complete a local presentation of the award. Media coverage is encouraged. See attached nomination form.



## **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

### **Talking Points for Community Presentations**

Target audiences:

1. Veterans groups such as the American Legion and VFW, including their auxiliary members
2. Ministerial associations
3. Civic groups, such as, Sertoma, Optimist, Rotary, or Kiwanis

#### **Elder Abuse**

In Nebraska each year Adult Protective Services investigates approximately 3,000 allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults. Almost 400 persons 50 and older were found to have been abused, neglected, and exploited in 2013. But, we know that elder abuse goes largely unreported. For every reported case, experts believe that as many as 23 cases go unreported.

Why does elder abuse remain such an “invisible” problem? Many victims are isolated, ashamed or embarrassed, particularly if a family member is the abuser, afraid to report for fear that the abuse will get worse or that they will have no one to care for them.

Many victims are people who are older, frail, and vulnerable and cannot help themselves and depend on others to meet their most basic needs. Abusers of older adults are both women and men, and may be family members, friends, or “trusted others.” Self-neglect and exploitation are the most common situations that Adult Protective Services workers deal with.

Elder abuse tends to take place where the senior lives: most often in the home where abusers are often adult children, other family members such as grandchildren, or spouses/partners of elders. Elder abuse can also occur in institutional settings, especially long-term care facilities.

**In Nebraska:** Statistics from the 2010 United States Census indicated that the population of older Americans (65 years old plus) was 247,518 (13.5 percent of the total Nebraska population). By 2030, Nebraska’s total population is projected to be 1,820,247 and the projected population of Nebraskans age 65 and over will be 375,811 (20.6 percent). By that year, as many as 1 in 5 Nebraskans will likely be elderly.

The “oldest old” -- those aged 85 and over -- are the most rapidly growing elderly age group. With these statistics and projections, it is clear that the U.S. should be preparing itself for the many changes that will accompany this explosion in the older population.

**Financial Exploitation is a growing concern.** According to the results of the study “Old Age and Decline in Financial Literacy” completed by the Texas Tech University, financial literacy declines by about 1% each year after age 60. However, an individual's confidence in financial decision making abilities does **not** decline with age.

#### **Cognitive Impairments.**

No one is immune to Alzheimer's, and there is no known preventive measure. The cause is still not known, but risk increases dramatically with age. It is almost unheard of in people aged 20-39, and very uncommon

(about 1 in 2,500) for people aged 40-59. In the 60s, the odds begin to get more worrisome. An estimated 1 percent of 65 year olds have Alzheimer's or a closely-related dementia,

- 2 percent of 68 year-olds
- 3 percent of 70 year-olds
- 6 percent of 73 year-olds
- 9 percent of 75 year-olds
- 13 percent of 77 year-olds

And so on. The risk accelerates with age, to the point where dementia affects nearly half of those 85 and over. Even those without dementia, mild cognitive impairment affects about 22 percent of those aged 71 and older.

### **Risk Factors**

Several factors concerning elders themselves, while they don't excuse abuse, influence whether they are at greater risk for abuse:

- Social isolation; e.g., the elder and caregiver are alone together almost all the time
- The intensity of an elderly person's illness or dementia
- The elder's role, at an earlier time, as an abusive parent or spouse
- A history of domestic violence in the home
- The elder's own tendency toward verbal or physical aggression

### **Preventing elder abuse and neglect**

Preventing elder abuse ideas:

- Listen to seniors and their caregivers
- Intervene when you suspect elder abuse. Call APS hotline at 1-800-652-1999 or make referrals
- Watch for warning signs that might indicate elder abuse.  
If you suspect abuse, *report it*.
- Take a look at the elder's medications. Does the amount in the vial jive with the date of the prescription?
- Watch for possible financial abuse. Ask the elder if you may look over bank accounts and credit card statements for unauthorized transactions.
- Call and visit as often as you can. Help the elder consider you a trusted confidante.
- Offer to stay with the elder so the caregiver can have a break — on a regular basis, if possible.

### **Indicators of the various types of mistreatment:**

#### **Physical abuse**

- Unexplained signs of injury such as bruises, welts, or scars, especially if they appear symmetrically on two sides of the body
- Broken bones, sprains, or dislocations
- Report of drug overdose or apparent failure to take medication regularly (a prescription has more remaining than it should)
- Broken eyeglasses or frames
- Signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists
- Caregiver's refusal to allow you to see the elder alone

**Sexual abuse**

- Bruises around breasts or genitals
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections
- Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing

**Neglect by caregivers or self-neglect**

- Unusual weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration
- Untreated physical problems, such as bed sores
- Unsanitary living conditions: dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes
- Being left dirty or unbathed
- Unsuitable clothing or covering for the weather
- Unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water; faulty electrical wiring, other fire hazards)
- Desertion of the elder at a public place

**Financial exploitation**

- Significant withdrawals from the elder's accounts
- Sudden changes in the elder's financial condition
- Items or cash missing from the senior's household
- Suspicious changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, and policies
- Addition of names to the senior's signature card
- Unpaid bills or lack of medical care, although the elder has enough money to pay for them
- Financial activity the senior couldn't have done, such as an ATM withdrawal when the account holder is bedridden
- Unnecessary services, goods, or subscriptions

**Healthcare fraud and abuse**

- Duplicate billings for the same medical service or device
- Evidence of over-medication or under-medication
- Evidence of inadequate care when bills are paid in full
- Problems with the care facility: poorly trained, poorly paid, or insufficient staff; crowding; inadequate responses to questions about care

**What you can do when someone shares that they are a victim:**

Response: Compassion and Referral

- Listen with empathy and without judgment.
- Affirm the victim's right to safety. Affirm that safety is your first concern.
- Reassure the victim that the abuse is NOT their fault.
- If your conversation is confidential or privileged, remind your client of that fact, and that you will not act without their permission.
- Help the victim connect to a domestic violence, sexual assault, or elder abuse advocate, or Adult Protective Services.

Addressing elder abuse takes coordination of many entities such as:

- religious leaders
- advocates
- police
- adult protective services
- health professionals
- friends
- policy makers
- judges and legal professionals
- educators
- financial institutions
- community members

These are types of interventions/resources for elders:

#### **Domestic & Sexual Violence Programs**

- 24-hour crisis lines
- Emergency housing
- Individual, peer and group counseling
- Legal advocacy
- Community education
- Safety Planning

An individualized set of strategies designed to maximize the safety of a person who may be in danger of further harm from a perpetrator.

- Includes physical, emotional and financial safety
- Does not require a victim to leave
- Should be constantly evolving

#### **Adult Protective Services**

**1-800-652-1999**

- Investigate reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of older adults and/or persons who are unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Arrange services to make adults safe and to allow the most personal freedom possible
- Seek guardianship &/or conservatorship of adults who have been abused, neglected, or exploited and who are unable to make decisions for themselves and have no family or friends to help them
- Safety Planning

Nebraska has a mandatory reporting law for persons who are in the medical, mental health, developmental disabilities, and any other human services provider.

#### **Aging Network**

- Transportation
- Meals
- Home health
- Social programs
- Assistance with benefits

## **Legal**

Any civil legal services organization can assist an eligible victim regardless of age

- However, many communities also have elder-specific legal services programs
- Elder law expertise may or may not be necessary

Some civil remedies:

- Civil protection order
- Divorce
- Power of Attorney

Some criminal charges:

- Assault
- Fraud
- Confinement

***Find out about the resources in your area!***



**Elder Abuse Prevention  
Advocate of the Year**

**Nomination Form**

Do you know an individual who has worked to raise  
awareness of abuse issues in later life?

If so, DHHS wants to recognize people who take an active role to protect elders, preserve the autonomy and dignity of our elders, or fight for elder justice. These should be people who have worked to ensure fair treatment of older people in your community or workplace.

Mark the award appropriate award category for this nomination :

\_\_\_\_\_ A person to be recognized for their work in their local community.  
Community/Counties served: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ A person to be recognized for their work that has statewide impact.

**Nominee's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominated By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Contact Information:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

Write a narrative explaining why you are nominating this person for the

**Elder Abuse Prevention Advocate of the Year**

Examples include:

- People who have excelled in the legal system to protect victims of elder crimes.
- People who have provided excellent services and programming for elders.
- People who have identified red flags of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and took action to assist the elder.
- People who have made an impact on public policy regarding the service system to elder adults.

- People who have worked to help communities build bridges between individuals and organizations so they have a better understanding of abuse and neglect in later life.
- People who have worked with a particular ethnic community on abuse issues affecting older adults.
- People who have worked to reduce the use of physical or chemical restraints in nursing homes.
- People who have worked to bridge the generation gap between older adults and children.
- People who have conducted trainings to educate their communities about elder abuse.

Your nomination narrative should highlight why the individual deserves to be selected as Elder Abuse Prevention Advocate of the Year. Give examples of this individual's special contributions during the past year.

**Reasons for Nomination (please limit comments to the area below):**

On or before **May 30, 2014**, send your nomination form to:

Madhavi Bhadbhade  
301 Centennial Mall S, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Lincoln, NE 68509